



Veronica Hall

MUNGINDI

Neither the old ways nor the new way

Veronica Hall is one of the luckier residents of Mungindi, a small town of 800-900 people located in the northwest of New South Wales, on the Queensland border.

At the moment she is in Warwick, Queensland, doing nurse's training at the hospital there.

But for most of the 100-odd aboriginal people of Mungindi the future is less clear and less bright.

"Young kids can't get work around here", says Mrs Troutman who lives in one of the five homes on the reserve, about a mile out of town. She claims there is a colour bar against Aborigines, although her neighbour, Mrs Holten, claims the employment situation is just as bad for whites.

Veronica got her start at one of the few places in the district where there is any work for women—at the hospital just across the river, in Queensland. Most of the jobs in town are said to go to married women.

Only one boy, Kevin Parton, has really left town to get a job. He went to Brisbane to work as a plumber. Less than half-a-dozen of the local men have permanent jobs. The rest rely on casual work.